

NRCS LANDUSE DEFINITIONS

MAY 2014

Modifiers

Modifiers provide a level of specificity and help describe how the land is actually managed.

Irrigated – applied when an operational system is present and managed to supply water

Wildlife – applied when the client is actively managing for wildlife, and management is reflected in the conservation plan through the application of practices beneficial to wildlife

Grazed – applied when grazing animals impact how land is managed and influence the conservation plan

Land Use

CROP

Land used primarily for the production and harvest of annual or perennial field, forage, food, fiber, horticultural, orchards, vineyards and/or energy crops.

PASTURE

Lands composed of introduced or domesticated native forage species that is used primarily for the production of livestock. They receive periodic renovation and/or cultural treatments, such as tillage, fertilization, mowing, weed control, and may be irrigated. They are not in rotation with crops.

RANGE

Land used primarily for the production of grazing animals. Includes native plant communities and those seeded to native or introduced species, or naturalized by introduced species, that are ecologically managed using range management principles.

DESIGNATED PROTECTED AREA

Land or water used for the preservation, protection, and observation of the existing resources, archaeological or historical interpretation, resource interpretation, or for aesthetic value.

These areas are officially designated by legislation or other authorities. Examples: legislated natural or scenic areas and rural burial plots.

FOREST

Land on which the primary vegetation is tree cover (climax, natural or introduced plant community) and use is primarily for production of wood products and/or non-timber forest products.

FARMSTEAD

Land used for facilities and supporting infrastructure where farming, forestry, animal husbandry and ranching activities are often initiated.

This may include dwellings, equipment storage plus farm input and output storage and handling facilities. Also includes land dedicated to the facilitation and production of high intensity animal agriculture in a containment facility where daily nutritional requirements are obtained from other lands or feed sources.

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NEW Land Use Categories

ASSOCIATED AGRICULTURE LANDS

Land associated with farms and ranches that are not purposefully managed for food, forage or fiber and are typically associated with nearby production and/or conservation lands.

This could include incidental areas such as: idle center pivot corners, odd areas, ditches and watercourses, riparian areas, field edges, seasonal and permanent wetlands, and other similar areas.

OTHER ASSOCIATED AGRICULTURE LANDS

Land that is barren, sandy, rocky or that is impacted by the extraction of natural resources such as minerals, gravel/sand, coal, shale, rock, oil or natural gas.

Water

Geographic area whose dominant characteristic is open water/permanent ice or snow. May include intermingled land, including tidal influenced coastal marsh lands.

DEVELOPED LAND

Land occupied by buildings and related facilities used for residences, commercial sites, public highways, airports, and open space associated with towns and cities.